



East Link Extension



July 8, 2013

Mercer Island Final Design Open House Public Involvement Summary

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Background

East Link Extension is a key element of the regional mass transit system approved by voters in 2008. This 14-mile light rail line will benefit local communities and support regional growth with fast, frequent and reliable light rail service, connecting Seattle to the Eastside's biggest population and employment centers.

The project builds on the Central Link light rail system running between Sea-Tac Airport and downtown Seattle and the University Link and South 200th Link Extensions that are scheduled to open in 2016. East Link is part of the new light rail extensions being built north, south and east from Seattle.



When East Link opens, with a targeted date of 2023, 10 stations, serving Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue, Bel-Red and Overlake in Redmond will become a part of a regional light rail system stretching more than 50 miles. By 2030, about 50,000 riders will use East Link every day.

In 2011, Sound Transit completed environmental review and received a federal Record of Decision to build East Link. East Link advanced to final design in 2011. During final design, project architects and engineers define the light rail system, determining the technical specifications for the stations, bridges, tracks and other elements as well as construction methods and sequencing. The Sound Transit art program, STart, also begins work to select station artists and artworks during final design. There are multiple opportunities for the community to help influence design elements and stay informed as East Link moves forward.

East Link Timeline




Light rail travels east from Seattle across Lake Washington on the I-90 floating bridge. Light rail serves Mercer Island with a station in the center roadway of I-90. Riders will enter the station at 77th Ave SE and 80th Ave SE, in close proximity to the Mercer Island Park-and-Ride lot.


Sound Transit hosted an open house on June 6, 2013 to present current design concepts for the Mercer Island portion of East Link Extension. The meeting served to introduce Sound Transit's team of engineers, architects and community outreach staff to the Mercer Island community; educate the community on the final design process, including what to expect and how to stay informed; provide an overview of the project schedule, benefits, and final design elements; and present and gather comments on design plans for the Mercer Island portion of the I-90 segment. The open house was held at Mercer Island Community & Event Center from 5 to 7 p.m.

The open house was widely publicized through the following channels:

- Display advertisements in the Mercer Island Reporter, Seattle Transit Blog, La Raza, Seattle Chinese Post, and Mercer Island Patch
- Postcards mailed to over 23,000 Mercer Island residents and businesses
- A press release to local papers and blogs
- Email notification to approximately 5,500 subscribers of the East Link Extension listserv

Postcards mailed to over
23,000 Mercer Island
residents and businesses





Kick Off to Final Design


PLEASE JOIN US!

EAST LINK OPEN HOUSE FOR MERCER ISLAND


East Link Extension has entered final design, the process that advances design work from approximately 30 percent to 100 percent completion. Final design offers many opportunities for residents, neighborhood organizations, property owners and businesses to get involved. **Attend the open house to learn more about the Mercer Island station.**

Mercer Island Community & Event Center
 Thursday, June 6, 2013 • 5-7 p.m.
 8236 S.E. 24th St., Mercer Island
 Presentation at 5:30 p.m.


LEARN ABOUT:




Station design



Public art

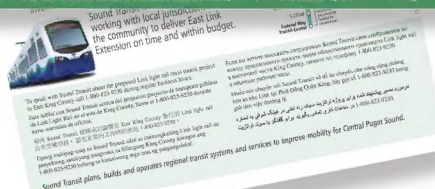


Permanent station names



City of Mercer Island projects

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Visit www.soundtransit.org/eastlink or contact Sound Transit at (206) 398-5470, eastlink@soundtransit.org or find information in alternative formats, call 1-800-201-4900/TTY Relay: 711 or email accessibility@soundtransit.org



Open house overview

Approximately 85 people attended the open house to learn about design plans for East Link in Mercer Island and provide comments. Attendees were greeted by project staff, asked to sign-in and were provided with a Community Guide to Final Design, Mercer Island fact sheet, and comment forms. Display boards and roll plots featured information about East Link, the final design process and design plans, including the Mercer Island station and track.

An overview presentation was held at 5:30 p.m., followed by an opportunity to ask questions. Project staff members were available throughout the meeting to answer questions and explain design details to the public. Attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts on the design plans as well as the permanent station name. All meeting materials and electronic versions of the comment forms were made available on the East Link project website (www.soundtransit.org/eastlink) following the open house.



Comment Summary

Sound Transit accepted public comments in-person at the open house, and by mail, email and electronically on the East Link website. The following section is a summary of approximately 143 comments collected between June 6 and June 14, 2013. Transcribed comments are italicized below to highlight the tone of public feedback.

Mercer Island Station Design

- Interest in incorporating elements of the area's natural environment into station design:

- *The station drawings show a very white structure that does not blend into surroundings. Please use materials and color scheme that blends more in with the trees and hills.*
- *Nature; high quality residential area.*
- *I love the glass lantern design.*
- *Art aspects might include: water, sailboats, swimmers, birds, ducks.*
- *Please keep the silhouette as low/unobtrusive as possible. We don't need anything too grand. Understated is better. Use warm colors. Reduce the apparent bulk looking north/south—renderings look too massive.*
- *Island / nautical theme.*

- Interest in station amenities:

- *Maybe a kiosk near the stairs for buying coffee.*
- *Also would be good to add a coffee and snack stand.*
- *Clearly make it possible to use a toilet anytime the light rail is in operation. I realize that these may not be in the current design however there needs to be provisions for toilets even when commercial businesses are closed if the light rail is in operation.*

Mercer Island Station Access

- Interest in additional parking capacity:

- *Seems pointless to build a station without a certainty of additional parking. Park & ride lot is full by 7 am. Why build light rail that either takes riders from buses or doesn't have riders because there is no parking? I know people who used to ride from Rainier but no longer can because their bus service to the light rail*

has been eliminated and you have no parking. I am very familiar with the SF Bart service. It's success is largely due to the parking provided at their stations. I like the idea of future TOD.

- *Please make sure there is lots of parking. Everyone on the east side will drive and park on Mercer Island to switch to public transport into the city or airport. We don't have enough parking now.*

- *A multi-story parking facility is required for commuters!*

- Concerns about parking for Mercer Island residents:

- *The largest hurdle for the station will be providing parking—the Mercer Island staff partnership will be crucial to light rail. Mercer Island city needs to sell a yearly parking pass to Mercer residents to use a Mercer Island funded lot. A portion of the community center should be designated for residents with permits.*
- *Important to resist adding more parking on MI because that would add to traffic jam between MI & Bellevue. We do need some parking reserve for MI residents possibly a separate lot.*
- *Allocating parking for Mercer Island residents is ESSENTIAL to making this work for our community. We need allocated parking for our community!*
- *For the station to serve MI — that is, all of MI — it needs parking that MI residents can reasonably rely on. I don't see that in the current plan.*
- *Only Mercer Island residents can use the parking lot.*
- *Please, work on a central parking area for M.I. residents only. Even now it is hard to find a parking spot during day. Consider a 3, 4, 5 story parking garage.*

- Interest in bicycle storage:

- *Need more room for bikes.*
- *Make sure to include enough bike lockers.*
- *Need to be able to take bikes through station onto the Link.*

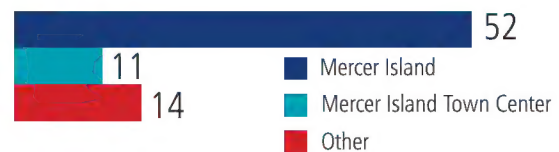
- *Why only one bike cage?*
- *Insufficient bike parking (80 slots = 4% of new riders).*
- **Comments related to safety and security:**
 - *Add lighting along 77th and 80th walkways.*
 - *Safe pedestrian pass from parking lot to station.*
 - *Provide ample lighting along sidewalk.*
 - *Are there discussions w/ MI City about increasing MI police security in the evening & night hours, on the neighborhood streets?*
 - *Provide 24 hour cameras inside & out (safety concern).*
- **Concern about 77th Ave SE & 80th Ave SE sidewalk access during construction:**
 - *There is a pathway on only one side of 80th and 77th. Close these walkways for construction would force a lengthy pedestrian detour and inhibit access to the existing park and ride.*
 - *Sidewalks on 77th and 80th are only on the station side of the street. So, during construction, phase the work so people can still use the walkway and not walk a full block around. Essentially keep the ability to walk along 77th and 80th throughout construction.*

Permanent Station Naming Comment Summary

- **General comments:**
 - *Shorter is better. "Mercer Island Town Center" is needlessly wordy since there will only ever be one light rail station on Mercer Island.*
 - *Please consider Luther Burbank as alternative name. I prefer Mercer Island.*
 - *I find that ST's habit of always having the word "station" as part of the name, particularly on the trains is SOOO unnecessary.*
 - *Regardless of the chosen name, I think it would be best that the name of the light rail station and the name of the ST bus stop should be the same.*
 - *I think the Town Center designation gives riders the information that they will emerge in a commercial zone at the station location. Useful for those of us who have to make spontaneous decisions when riding (like incontinence, with children, etc.) I had the problem in*

the Rainier Valley that the Othello Station is in the middle of NOWHERE!

- *Naming the station after Mr. Davis would honor not only a Mercer Islander but someone who worked for many years to improve transportation in our region.*
- *They should all be the name of the community e.g. Mercer Island, Enatai, Surrey Downs, Downtown Bellevue, etc.*
- *Since it's the only stop on Mercer Island the name should be simply Mercer Island. If there were more than one stop it would make sense to define where on the island it was.*
- **What is your preference for the Mercer Island Station name?**



Out of a total of 77 respondents, the majority—68 percent—indicated Mercer Island as their preferred station name.

Next Steps

Sound Transit will incorporate public comments to the extent possible while working to advance design of the Mercer Island portion of the I-90 segment to 60 percent completion. The next opportunity to provide formal public comment will occur at the 60 percent design milestone which is anticipated in the second half of 2013. Please continue to visit the project website for the latest news:

www.soundtransit.org/eastlink

For more information or to request a briefing for your organization, please contact Sound Transit Community Outreach staff at eastlink@soundtransit.org or 206-398-LINK.

East Link I-90 Segment: Mercer Island Station Renderings



East entry at 80th Ave SE looking northwest toward 77th Ave SE



Platform view to west entry at 77th Ave SE

